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Individuals Indicted in Newport News Drug Robbery Leading to Murder

(Newport News, VA) - A federal grand jury returned an indictment against Demario Boyd, age 23, of Newport News, Virginia, Sam Quinton Wallace, age 29, of Hampton, Virginia, Romaine Short, age 29, of Newport News, Virginia, and Sammy Zaharohopoulos, age 35, of Williamsburg, Virginia for their involvement in a drug conspiracy which resulted in a drug robbery and the murder of Joseph Ocasio.

The indictment alleges that on April 15, 2006, Wallace arranged to purchase a quantity of high grade marijuana called "hydro" through Zaharohopoulos. Wallace and Short decided that instead of purchasing the marijuana they would conduct a drug robbery with the assistance of Demario Boyd. Following Wallace's discussions with Zaharopoulos, Joseph Ocasio was sent to Newport News to deliver the hydro marijuana. Wallace, Short and Boyd driving in one vehicle met Joseph Ocasio and another individual at the BayBerry Village Shopping Center near J. Clyde Morris Boulevard. Wallace and Boyd entered Ocasio's Mercedes Benz to complete the drug transaction. Entering Ocasio's vehicle, Boyd pulled a handgun and robbed Ocasio of the marijuana. Boyd then shot and killed Ocasio. Wallace, Boyd and Short separately fled from the scene of the shooting. Wallace was arrested nearby with blood stains on his pants. Short fled to the area of the Camelot Apartments, abandoned his vehicle, and called a taxi cab. Boyd fled to Georgia.

The indictment also details a November 28, 2005 drug robbery committed by Boyd involving cocaine base.

Under federal law the maximum penalties for the crimes described in the indictment are as follows: The federal crime of Murder with a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime or Crime of Violence carries a maximum penalty of death or life imprisonment. Drug robberies charged as Interference with Commerce by Robbery violate federal law and carry a maximum penalty of 20 years. Brandishing a firearm during a drug robbery or a narcotics sale carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 7 years and discharging a firearm during a drug

robbery or narcotics sale carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years which run consecutive to the drug violation or robbery conviction. A Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute and Distribute Marijuana and the substantive crime of Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana carries a maximum of five years imprisonment. Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon carries a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment.

(It should be noted that the defendant is considered innocent until proven guilty.)

The investigation was conducted through the joint efforts of the Newport News Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives. The prosecution was coordinated with the assistance of the Newport News Commonwealth's Attorneys Office. Assistant United States Attorneys Howard Zlotnick and Lisa McKeel are prosecuting this case on behalf of the United States.

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